

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE BY BISHOP CURTIS J. GUILLORY: Nov. 26, 2007
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BEAUMONT DIOCESE AGAIN DETERMINED TO BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH USCCB CHARTER

Auditors have found that the Diocese of Beaumont is doing all in its power to help prevent child abuse in Southeast Texas. The Diocese of Beaumont was found again to be in **full compliance** with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' "**Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People**" following a thorough audit of diocesan policies, practices, and procedures.

The audit was conducted October 22-25, 2007, by The Gavin Group, Inc., an independent auditing organization headquartered in Boston, which was contracted by the U.S. Bishops' Conference (USCCB) to do these audits. An independent audit is required by the Charter.

This was the third on-site audit conducted on this diocese since 2003. In each of the previous audits the diocese was found to have met and exceeded the Charter's requirements. The diocese was exempted from the 2005 audit due to the devastation by Hurricane Rita; thus, the recent audit covered the period of December 10, 2004, through June 30, 2007.

The documentation provided to the auditors verified the following:

- 1) From December 2004 through June 30, 2007, at least 88 Protecting God's Children for **Adults** training sessions have been conducted in different locations throughout the diocese for church personnel (clergy, employees, volunteers, seminarians and deacon candidates) and interested parents.
- 2) During the fiscal year ending June 30, 2006, a total of 6,086 **students** in Catholic schools and in parish religious education programs received age-appropriate sexual abuse and prevention training. During the fiscal year ending June 30, 2007, a total of 6,516 students were trained.
- 3) In addition to the adult training in #1 above, training to equip **parents** to educate their children about this issue is also provided on the diocesan website (www.dioceseofbmt.org) under the Safe Environment link. Similar information is also published in the *East Texas Catholic* on the Safe Environment page.
- 4) Procedures for filing complaints of child sexual abuse, both to civil and church authorities, are clearly and readily available on the diocesan website under the Safe Environment link. In this same location is information about Victim Outreach and Assistance and about contacting our Victim Assistance Coordinator. Any person who has been sexually abused by church personnel, no matter how long ago, is encouraged to make contact.
- 5) Also on the diocesan website are the *Ethical and Responsible Conduct Policies* which clearly state the standards of behavior for all who minister in and work for the Church,

including those who volunteer their time and talent. These policies are distributed to each person as he or she begins service in the Church.

6) All clergy, employees, and those volunteers with access to children and youth have had background checks. We continue to exercise diligence in our selection of persons who will minister in the name of the Church.

Again, I want you to know that I am committed to the safety of all children and youth in our care. Those who serve in the Church have the serious responsibility to carry out the ministry in holiness and with integrity. All who serve God's people--clergy, religious, laity--are called to imitate fully the example of Jesus Christ and to be models of right conduct.

The Executive Summaries of all the dioceses will be published by the USCCB Office of Child and Youth Protection approximately March 2008 when the 2007 Fiscal Year Report on the Implementation of the Charter is released.

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